

not enough to complain and bellyache. It is not enough for Members of Congress to make excuses and dance around their most basic responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to deal with our national debt and balance the budget. The excuses are over. The gimmicks have all been tried and have failed.

Last November, the American people told Congress to get its act together. They sent a new Republican majority to do the job the first time in 40 years. Our party made a promise to give them what they have been denied for the last 25 years: simple, basic, financial accountability from the U.S. Congress.

Today is historic. For the first time in a generation, Congress will vote to balance the budget and do the right thing for America's future and for America's children.

#### THIS BUDGET BILL DOES THE WRONG THING

(Mr. WARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, today we are going to be faced with a budget which I feel does the wrong thing. It does the wrong thing because it cuts at the very heart of our safety net in this country, and that is our seniors and their reliance on the Medicare Program.

A \$270 billion reduction in the spending over the next 7 years will absolutely be a cut in services. And why? At the same time I wonder are we being given the choice, not given the choice, not given the choice to take out of this bill a \$245 billion tax break.

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This tax break is not needed. It is only being funded this year by the cuts that will be seen in the Medicare Program. Why, oh why, in the efforts to balance the budget are we reducing taxes when we are seeing the highest income earners in America seeing their taxes reduced by this bill?

#### BALANCING THE BUDGET WILL HELP THE POOR WITH STRONG ECONOMIC GROWTH

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, the liberal Democrats in this House say they cannot support a plan to balance the budget because it will hurt the poor too much. This is the most bizarre argument I've ever heard.

I know it drives my liberal friends nuts, but the fact is, the best anti-poverty program this country has to offer is strong economic growth. And the best way to get strong economic growth is by cutting taxes. That was the lesson of the 1980's.

The tax cuts of both 1963 and 1981 created a rising tide that did indeed lift

all boats. Imagine if the tax cuts of 1981 had been coupled with comparable spending restraint by the Congress. The poor might actually have been able to survive the disastrous tax increases of 1990 and 1993.

Do my liberal friends really want to help the poor. Then balance the budget and cut taxes. It is a proven solution.

#### EFFECT OF THE GOP BUDGET ON RHODE ISLAND CHILDREN

(Mr. REED asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of my constituents who have no voice but who have a very large stake in the outcome of the debate over the GOP budget—the children of Rhode Island.

The Republican budget will eliminate Medicaid coverage for almost 40,000 children in Rhode Island, many whom are disabled. The Republican budget will cut nutrition assistance for almost 50,000 children in Rhode Island. The Republican budget jeopardizes immunizations for children in Rhode Island. The Republican budget will deny 14,000 children in Rhode Island child care assistance. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the list goes on and on.

I say to my Republican colleagues—we must work toward a balanced budget for our children, not balance the budget on the backs of our children. When it comes to public investment in children's health and education, denying a dollar today actually costs more in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against this short-sighted and mean spirited budget reconciliation bill.

#### HELP AMERICAN WORKERS AND AMERICAN SMALL BUSINESS—JOIN THE TRAVEL AND TOURIST CAUCUS

(Mr. ROTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, we heard many speeches yesterday, and we will hear more today, good speeches on reconciliation. I just want to address one question of the aftermath of a less-government role. I think we have to allow private enterprise some elbow room, and we are going to have the opportunity to do that on Monday and Tuesday. We have for the first time ever the most important conference in this decade in this city, the Travel and Tourist Conference. Travel and tourism is the second largest industry in America. They need less taxes, they need less regulation, so we can give our people jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this is a conference for American workers, American small business, Main Street America. Travel and tourism is becoming the real eco-

nomic power right here in America and all over the globe, as the futurists tell us. Now Congress can be involved in this small business enterprise, in this travel and tourism. We have the travel and tourist caucus.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GILLMOR] is our 300th member, and I salute him for joining the travel and tourist caucus. We now have 304 members, and I ask all the Members in Congress to join the travel and tourist caucus. Let us do something positive for American workers and American small business. Please call my office, join the caucus. Let us do something for American workers.

#### THE REPUBLICANS' 30-YEAR GOAL TO END MEDICARE

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago the Republican leader of the other body voted against the creation of Medicare, and yesterday he bragged of that vote saying that he knew it did not work, and he was proud of his vote, and he was proud that he fought against Medicare.

On this side of the street, Speaker NEWT GINGRICH joined the trashing of Medicare, and on Tuesday he revealed the real GOP plan, to privatize Medicare. Speaker GINGRICH said, and I quote, "We didn't get rid of it in round 1 because we don't think that that's politically smart."

1965-1995, Republicans are closing in on their 30-year goal to end Medicare. Welcome to the Gingrich revolution.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). The Chair would remind Members they are not to refer to Members in the other body.

#### RED RIBBON WEEK

(Mr. PORTMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, as important as budget reconciliation is, and it is very important, this morning I would like to address something else. This is National Red Ribbon Week; my colleagues may have seen people wearing these red ribbons on the floor of this House and around the country. It is a week to call on our Nation's citizens, particularly our young people, to stay healthy and drug-free.

Mr. Speaker, this is a critical and timely message because unfortunately in one generation it appears that normalized attitudes toward drug abuse has led to an epidemic increase in the number of drug users. The frightening fact is that although we seem to be